

A CELEBRATION OF
INTERNATIONAL GUIDE DOG DAY

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2000

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, on April 26, thousands of individuals around the world will celebrate International Guide Dog Day. This day was brought to my attention last November, when I received a letter from a constituent of mine, Ms. Christine de Angeli. She is a junior at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Pottomac, MD, and has spent a great deal of time as a foster puppy raiser. She believes that having sight is a gift, and feels that it is important for her to donate her time toward improving mobility for those with visual impairments. At her urging, the State of Maryland will issue a Governor's Proclamation recognizing International Guide Dog Day.

Christine is currently raising her second dog guide puppy. Often when she is out with the puppy, she encounters people who are unaware of the opportunity to become a foster puppy raiser, oftentimes they are very interested in learning more about how they can help. These volunteers are great ambassadors for our country's dog guide program.

Just by happenstance Mr. Speaker, a new staff person in my office is a dog guide user. Watching her work her dog guide on the Metro, in meetings, and around the office has given me a much greater appreciation for the value of these dog guides and how they enable one to keep working despite the loss of vision.

Ms. de Angeli feels strongly that in this country we should have a day to recognize the work of dog guides, their handlers, the families, and many organizations such as the Lions Club that support dog guide schools.

Dog guides change the lives of people who are blind or have low vision. Training dog guides takes both volunteer time and private donations of funds. The average cost to successfully train a blind person and their dog guide is about \$25,000. Dog guide organizations rely on foster puppy raisers to raise future dog guides from the age of eight weeks until they start their formal guide training at 18 months. As International Guide Dog Day is acknowledged, many more families will become aware of the opportunity to be foster puppy raisers and will hopefully contribute time and energy to help their fellow citizens.

I salute these selfless individuals and marvelous animals for their contributions to our society.

TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH HOJNICKI,
MEMBER OF THE CENTURY OF
THE MINQUADALE FIRE COM-
PANY

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2000

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I, as a member of the Congress-

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sional Fire Service Caucus, honor and pay tribute to a leader in the firefighting community—Joseph Hojnicky of the Minquadale Fire Company. Joseph Hojnicky is an outstanding, dedicated and caring Delawarean with an abundance of accomplishments in this field. On behalf of myself and the citizens of the First State, I would like to honor this outstanding individual and extend to him our congratulations on being chosen Minquadale Fire Company's Member of the Century.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the volunteer fire service in Delaware. It has been my privilege to have had the opportunity on many occasions to speak about this institution on the floor of the House of Representatives. These unselfish men and women provide their communities with essential volunteer public service. The volunteer fire service is as old as our nation. Benjamin Franklin was our first volunteer fire chief. It is tradition in the volunteer fire service for these men and women not to seek praise for what they do as volunteer firefighters. However, it is my privilege to praise Joseph Hojnicky, a man who has devoted the better part of his life to the volunteer fire service.

Today, I recognize Joseph Hojnicky of the Minquadale Delaware Fire Company. On Saturday, April 29, during the Seventy-fifth Annual Banquet of the Minquadale Fire Company, Joseph Hojnicky was named Member of the Century. He has provided more than 50 years of service to his community and the State of Delaware. He has done so in a manner that brings great distinction to the Minquadale community.

Family, friends and fellow firefighters can now take a moment to truly appreciate the world of difference Joseph Hojnicky has brought to the firefighting community. He has served for many years as Fire Chief and then President of the Minquadale Fire Company. He later earned a statewide reputation in Delaware for his service as President of the New Castle County Volunteer Firemen's Association and the Delaware Volunteer Firemen's Association. Today, while past the age of seventy, Joseph Hojnicky continues to respond to fire service calls to protect his community.

Joseph Hojnicky believes in young people. His firm yet friendly manner has influenced and encouraged young men and women to become involved in the fire service. For many it was an alternative to the street and possibly getting into trouble. Joseph Hojnicky's leadership and guiding hand helped create many fine firefighters and officers while he taught civic responsibility to two generations of Minquadale's youth. Mr. Speaker, with his wife Irene at his side, the Hojnicky family proudly and unselfishly contributes everyday to the quality of life at home in their community and our entire state.

As Minquadale celebrates their Diamond Anniversary, I join with them as they honor and pay tribute to a man whom they have called their "greatest member." His selfless commitment to the cause of volunteer firefighters will have a permanent place in Delaware's volunteer fire service history. I am proud to call Joseph Hojnicky my friend.

May 2, 2000

TRIBUTE TO COMMAND SGT. MAJ.
DAVID B. RABON

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 2, 2000

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, the Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer says, in part, "I will strive to remain tactically and technically proficient. I am aware of my role as a Non-commissioned officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my soldiers and will always place their needs above my own . . ." These words certainly seem to be the sentiments of the many men and women of my home island who have distinguished themselves in all branches of military service. Indeed, military men from Guam have won praises for their loyalty, their patriotism, their commitment to duty, and their dedication to the mission for more than 300 years.

In the 17th century, when the Spaniards recruited men from Guam as sailors in the Spanish fleet; in World Wars I and II, when the American military worked shoulder to shoulder with Guamanians both as civilian volunteers and uniformed personnel; in the Korean war and the Vietnam conflict; in other conflicts with American involvement since then; and most recently, in the Persian Gulf war, the record established and maintained by military men and women from Guam is a long and very proud one. This continues today.

As we enter the new millennium, another son of Guam is carrying on the tradition. It gives me great pride to say that the new commandant of the U.S. Army Aviation Center Noncommissioned Officer Academy at Fort Rucker, AL, is Command Sgt. Maj. David B. Rabon, the son of Jesus Bontugan and Rosa Benavente Rabon. Born in my home village of Sinajana on August 15, 1949, Sergeant Major Rabon enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1972, attended basic training at Fort Ord, CA, and advanced individual training [AIT] at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, MD, graduating from the AIT as an aircraft fire control repairman. In the 27 years he has spent in the Army, Sergeant Major Rabon has held numerous positions of leadership including squad leader; unit nuclear biological and chemical NCO; battalion aviation maintenance NCOIC; platoon sergeant; company first sergeant; service school instructor; service school branch chief; battalion and brigade command sergeant major.

Sergeant Major Rabon's awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal with One Oak Leaf Cluster, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal with One Oak Leaf Cluster, the Good Conduct Medal 9th Award, the National Defense Service Medal w/Star, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Armed Forces Service Medal, the Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon with numeral "4", the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon with numeral "4", the NATO Medal, the Master Aircraft Crewman Badge, the Air Assault Badge, and the Honorable Order of St. Michael Bronze award.